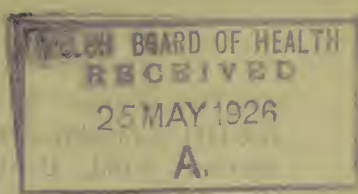
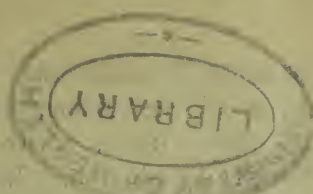
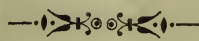


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384



FORDEN RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.



REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

*Including Part Report of the late Sanitary
Inspector (Mr. E. Donnelly, A.R. San. I.)*

FOR THE YEAR 1925.



GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you my Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Conditions of the District for the year 1925 in accordance with the Ministry of Health Circular 648 (Wales). A survey Report :—

The Forden Rural District embraces the following (17) Townships and Parishes, viz: Aston, Bausley, Berriew Rural, Castle Caereinion Rural, Castlewright, Churchstoke, Criggion, Forden Hyssington, Leighton, Llandyssil, Llanmerewig, Middletown, Rhosgoch, Snead, Trelystan and Uppington.

The District extends nearly 20 miles, from Coedway within 9 miles of Shrewsbury town, to Cilgwrgan, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles out-side Newtown; it also approaches Llanfair Caereinion within 2 miles, and Bishop's Castle within 2 miles. The District is cut through by two Municipal Boroughs, viz.: Montgomery and Welshpool. A detached portion (containing Churchstoke, etc.) is cut off from the main part by an intervening corner of Shropshire.

The District, which is irregular and scattered, covering a large area chiefly in length, is purely agricultural. Some of these parishes, notably Bausley, Castlewright and Hyssington, project themselves into an adjoining county, Shropshire. The District is chiefly mountainous, wooded hills and narrow undulating valleys, mostly on the banks of the river Severn and its tributaries Rhiew and Camlad (Severn and Churchstoke valleys). The summit of Caer Digoll being 1,338 feet, and the Byrwydd, S.W. of Castle Caereinion, being 1,193 feet, Corndon 1,684 feet, and the Breidden 1,202 feet above the sea level, with the consequent result that the quality of the air naturally varies, being dry and bracing on the hills and more or less humid and oppressive in the valleys. Accordingly also the nature of the soil varies, being in some parts clayey, overlaying shale and sand stone; in other parts, loam and shale overlaying lime stone, probably of igneous or volcanic rocks.

Areas (Acres) 50,215 exclusive of Area covered by water.

Population (1921) 5638, (1925) 5733.

Number of Inhabited Houses (1921) 1261.

Number of Families of Separate Occupiers (1921) 1277.

Rateable Value £59232.

Sum represented by a penny Rate £128 13s. 5d.

Population.

1901	..	5,784.	1921	..	5,638.
1911	..	5,737.	1925	..	5,733.

Rateable Value.

1921	..	£57,828.	1924	..	£59,930.
1922	..	£59,005.	1925	..	£59,232.
1923	..	£57,930.			

Sums represented by a 1d. Rate.

1921	..	£164. 0s. 0d.	1924	..	£120 14s. 11d.
1922	..	£162 10s. 3d.	1925	..	£128 13s. 5d.
1923	..	£120 14s. 11d.			

Birth and Birth-Rate.

		Males.	Females.	Total.
Births	Legitimate ..	44	44	88
	Illegitimate ..	3	4	7
	Total Births	47	48	95

The Birth-Rate per 1,000 population—16·5, as against 18·5 in 1924.

Deaths and Death-Rate.

Deaths	{ Males 30 }	= Total 68
	{ Females 38 }	

The Crude Death-Rate is 11·8 per 1,000, as against 13·1 in 1924.

Infantile Mortality.

Deaths of Infants under 12 months old,

Males .. 2	} = Total 4, all legitimate.
Females .. 2	

The Infantile Mortality rate per 1,000 births is 42, as against 48 in 1924.

Notifiable Diseases during 1925.

Diseases.	Total Cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Diphtheria	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	7	—	1
Enteric „	—	—	—
Puerperal „ . . .	—	—	—
Pneumonia	7	—	3
Measles	—	—	1
Erysipelas	1	—	—
Small Pox	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum..	—	—	—
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ..	3	7	3
Non-Pulmonary „ ..	3	4	—
TOTAL ..	21	11	6

Notifiable Diseases including Tuberculosis.

CASES.			
1921	37	Chiefly Measles.	
1922	74	„ Scarlet Fever.	
1923	58	„ „	
1924	52	„ Pneumonia.	
1925	21	„ Pneumonia and Scarlet Fever.	

Scarlet Fever.

There were 7 cases notified during the year as compared with Nil in 1924 and 26 in 1923 and 45 in 1922.

Tuberculosis in 1925.

Tuberculosis is dealt with under the Welsh National Memorial Association, and the Tuberculosis Physician for the County is Dr. R. Owen Morris, who examines and treats all cases referred to him by the Practitioners of the District, and also by the School Medical Officer. He also examines as far as possible those who have been in close contact with Tuberculosis Patients.

During the year 3 cases of Pulmonary, and 3 cases of Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified to the Medical Officer of the Area. Some Patients received Dispensary Treatment only, others received Domiciliary or two kinds of Treatment combined.

11 Patients from the Forden Rural District admitted to the Hospitals and Sanatoria of the King Edward VII. Welsh National Memorial during 1925 :—

	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
In Residence Jan. 1st, 1925 ..	4	2	4	10
Admitted during year ..	4	3	4	11
Discharged during year ..	4	2	5	11
In Residence Jan. 1st, 1926 ..	4	3	3	10

Of those discharged :—9 Improved ; 1 Arrest ; 1 Died.

Those discharged (between them) had a total of 362 weeks of treatment in the Institutions of the Association.

In addition, a considerable number of cases were examined and diagnosed at the Welshpool Clinics and the Tubercular Patients are encouraged to keep in touch with the Tuberculosis Physician until they are regarded safe. Suspicious Members of the Patient's household are also examined as "Contacts." The Area Sister who works with Dr. Owen Morris has paid a large number of visits to Patients' homes and the District Nurses co-operate under the Memorial scheme which contribute £5 per annum to each Nursing Association.

Surgical and After Care Clinics for Tuberculosis.

Every alternate month one of the Medical Officers of the Surgical Block, Llangwyfan Sanatorium, accompanied by Dr. Owen Morris, holds a Clinic for the diagnosis of fresh cases and for keeping under observation the Surgical Patients who now at home after a course of Residential Treatment. Some are in plaster and many are in splints of various kinds, but at the Clinics splints are adjusted and for those who require it, re-admission to the Surgical Block is arranged. Without these Clinics, much of the good work done in the Surgical Hospitals of the Association will prove to be futile and the fact that the patients so willingly attend, even though they have to come long distances, is ample proof that the Clinics are appreciated by those concerned. All Tubercular Cripples can thus obtain treatment and After Care from the Edward Memorial Association without raising the question of expense or time.

It is highly desirable that similar arrangements should be come to by the County Council in the case of all other Cripples both as regards their treatment and their After Care, and it is interesting to know that some Counties in Wales have made such arrangements with the Shropshire Orthopædic Hospital at Park Hall, Oswestry.

The Welsh National Memorial Surgical Clinics which are attended by the people of the Rural Districts of Forden are held at Welshpool and notice is sent out by Dr. Owen Morris to Doctors and Patients before the date the Clinic is held.

In addition to Residential Treatment, suspicious and actual cases of Tuberculosis are seen by the Tuberculosis Physician at his Clinics in Welshpool and visits are paid to their homes by the Tuberculosis Physician and the Tuberculosis Sister.

Diphtheria.

No Cases were notified during the year as compared with 3 during the preceding year.

The incidence of these Infectious Diseases is a fair indication of the Sanitary condition of a place. Where cases occur, it is a call for a higher standard of cleanliness amongst the people, their houses and surroundings, schools, dairies, cow-sheds and farm yards.

Wherever there is dirt, infection will spread.

There is a Small Pox Hospital at Mochdre, Newtown, under the supervision of the County Public Health Authority.

Also a small Hospital at Forden, a temporary structure erected in 1904. It has not been used since then.

A Motor Ambulance is available for Non-Infectious and Accident cases.

Summary of Work of District Nurses in the Area for the Year ending 31st March, 1926:—

	Mid-wifery and Maternity.	Surgical and Medical	Tuberculosis.	Visits.	School Inspection.		Infant care Visits.
					Visits to Schools.	Visits to Homes.	
Berriew ..	Figures	not	avail-	able.			
Churchstoke ..	23	85	0	2154	20	Not stated.	421
Forden ..	12	67	4	1269	21	125	427
Abermule ..	16	64	3	609	32	74	321

Professional Nursing in the Home is carried out by District Nurses in connection with the County Nursing Association. All the Nurses are under local Nursing Associations which are affiliated to the County Nursing

Association. The latter arranges for the training of Nurses. All the Nurses are Certified Midwives, but in spite of all, not being fully trained in General Nursing, they are an invaluable asset to the Community. They were under the general supervision of the Lady Superintendent who also acted as Inspector of Midwives. They do the Infant Welfare Visiting and the duties of School Nurses, and they follow up School Cases, in addition to their Maternity and General Nursing Work. Their work is greatly appreciated by Doctors and the Public, but it is important that they should never undertake professional work which only qualified Medical Practitioners should undertake.

Causes of Death.

		Male.	Female.	Total.
Influenza	.. ..	0	3	3
Cancer	.. ..	7	4	11
Heart Disease	.. ..	4	7	11
Arterio-Sclerosis	.. ..	1	0	1
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	.. ..	3	0	3
Tuberculosis of Respiratory				
System		1	2	3
Bronchitis	.. ..	1	3	4
Pneumonia (all forms)	.. ..	1	2	3
Other Respiratory Disease	.. ..	—	—	—
Congenital Debility and				
Malformation, premature birth		1	2	3
Other defined Diseases	.. ..	6	10	16
Violence	.. ..	1	2	3
Ill-defined or Unknown	.. ..	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever, Appendicitis				
and Ulcer of Stomach				
(one of each)	.. ..	3	0	3
Measles, Pregnancy (one of				
each)	.. ..	—	2	2
Nephritis	.. ..	1	1	2
Grand Total	.. ..	30	38	68

Ages at Death.

Under 1 year	..	..	4
Between 1 year and 10 years	..	..	5
Between 10 and 20 years of age	..	..	4
Between 20 and 30 years of age	..	..	3
Between 30 and 40 years of age	..	..	2
Between 40 and 50 years of age	..	..	4
Between 50 and 60 years of age	..	..	6
Between 60 and 70 years of age	..	..	11
Between 70 and 80 years of age	..	..	12
Between 80 and 90 years of age	..	..	16
Over 90 years	..	..	1
Total			68

—————o—————

There are a few points which I should like to mention in this brief report:—

1. That the Death Rate of 11·8 as compared with 12·2 for England and Wales, is much better even than it looks as we have so large proportions of our population who are past middle life. The young flock to the towns, and the aged and decrepid are left behind.

2. Our Birth Rate of 16·5 is not a satisfactory one as compared with 18·3 for the whole of England and Wales. Last year it was 18·5.

This year, Heart Disease and Cancer head the list as the principal causes of death with 11 deaths to each—one death from Heart Disease and one from Cancer out of every six deaths, whereas Tuberculosis is one in 22 deaths.

As to Heart Disease, this may be due partly to the stress and strain of Rural life at the present time—one tries to do the work of two or more on the farm and thus deprived of the sleep and rest which are essential to the preservation of health. The excessive use of tobacco, especially in the young, the want of prolonged rest in bed after an attack of Rheumatic Fever, no matter how mild, are also contributory causes.

As to Cancer, we do not yet know the actual cause, but bad habits, bad food and bad teeth must be contributory causes.

I would again emphasise the need of attention to the simple and fundamental Laws of Health :—

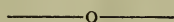
- (a) Adequate sleep and rest in the horizontal position.
- (b) The admission of abundant light and air into our houses. Windows have glass in them to let in the light and not for the exhibition of curtains, and sash cords are supplied to facilitate opening and not closing the windows.
- (c) The consumption of fresh, natural foods, wholemeal flour—or at least Country-mill flour, Oatmeal, Buttermilk, New and Skim Milk, Green Vegetables, Cheese, etc. On these lines—small money will go further in rearing a strong and healthy family.
- (d) Greater attention to the condition of the teeth and more frequent visits to the Dentist. There are many people who suffer from Rheumatic and Digestive troubles who would escape these evils had they a Hygienic mouth.
- (e) Less Clothes and more Soap and Water.
- (f) Securing Clean Milk by observing the following :—

CHIEF SOURCES OF CONTAMINATION OF MILK AND MEANS OF AVOIDING THEM.

SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION.	REMEDY.
Cow—Dirty Udder	.. Wash udder before milking.
Diseased Udder	.. Do not use the milk. Send for Veterinary Surgeon.

MILKER—Cloths	..	..	Wear clean overalls.
Hands	..	..	Wash hands before milking.
Illness	..	..	Those who are ill, or have sickness at home should cease milking until sanctioned by medical attention.
COWSHED—Air and dust	..	..	Avoid foddering and sweeping at and before milking. Remove milk from cowshed. as soon as possible.
UTENSILS—Milk-pails, Cans and coolers	..	..	Cleanse thoroughly by steam or boiling water.
STORAGE	..	..	Store only in a clean, cool and airy place, protected from flies and dust.

(g) A Slogan for All ;—"What you do and what you eat have more to do with your health than all the Doctors and Drugs in the world."



Laboratory Work.

The Welsh National Memorial at Cardiff, through Dr. Owen Morris, examines and reports on Sputum. The University of Manchester through Public Health Authority undertake the examination of Throat Swabs in suspected cases of Diphtheria, and Blood Examinations in Enteric Fever, also in Venereal Diseases; the Wussermen and other tests.

No (Adoptive) Acts.

Conserving Existing Water Supply (July, 1923).

Not applicable.

Slaughter Houses.

Two (2) Registered. Forden and Berriew. Condition satisfactory.

Factory and Workshop Acts, 1901.

Twenty-three (23) Registered. Condition satisfactory.

Sale of Food and Drugs Act is under the control of the County Council.

Officials.

Part time Medical Officer. Salary, contribution by Ministry of Health.

Sanitary Inspector—E. Donnelly, A.R. San. I., Report for 1925.

No other Officials.

Housing Needs.

The Ministry, this year, require information as to Housing conditions and requirements in Rural Areas. I therefore, cannot do better than repeat my detailed Report as presented to you in 1917. This Scheme was abandoned, temporary, I hope, owing to Financial difficulties.

The following Report was presented to the Council at a Meeting held September 1917:—"From time to time I have called your attention to this matter, and stated that more Cottages adapted to modern requirements are needed. The older Cottages in many instances have inadequate lighting, and bad ventilation through fixed windows; many are built on naturally damp and undrained sub-soil, causing permanent dampness, which has a bad effect on the general health of the Inhabitants and is favourable to tuberculosis, rheumatism, and other diseases which can never be eradicated until the people have proper or better Dwellings. Except in 1913, when 10 Cottages were built, practically no new Houses have been erected owing probably to heavy expenditure borne by all classes, as also by virtue of being a poor investment. The older people continue to live in these old Houses, while the young, when they marry, owing to the lack of Houses, migrate to adjoining Towns or elsewhere.

Now, owing to the great wastage of life caused by the deplorable War, the health of the young becomes such a pressing social problem, that the Local Government Board is prepared to give substantial financial help to any approved Scheme to those Local Authorities who are prepared to carry it through, without delay, at the conclusion of the War. This financial assistance, with public Funds, for the housing of the working classes is such that I hope and trust the Council will take the matter up in earnest. The War has altered our social conditions so profoundly that the housing problem should be amongst our first considerations, and I suggest that at least 12 Houses should be built in Berriew village, 12 in Churchstoke, 9 in Forden, and a further number totalling 50 in groups in various selected Districts, each with a substantial piece of Land attached thereto for the purpose of cultivation. These to a certain extent would replace a number of small Holdings now extinct, the Land being added to larger Farms, and the Houses having become dilapidated and finally disappearing altogether. You are all conversant with numerous instances of the kind. The proposed new Dwellings would induce people to remain on the Lane, and this would be a boon to the larger Farmers and a source of income to the ratepayers. Castle Caereinion Parish is included in the 50 Houses, but Castle Caereinion Village is omitted, as the Village itself is in the borough of Welshpool, which authority will presumably take the matter up. It is true that there are some empty Houses on Bausley Hill. To some extent these are of the 'squatters' type and are not in a fit state for habitation. The same remark may be applied to Hyssington District. In this case a Company in the adjacent County contemplates building a number of Houses which will serve this District."

CENSUS.

1861		1871	1881	1891		1901	1911
						86	80
2155	Berriew (Brithdir)	1929	1838	No information.	Brithdir	1535	1480
790	Llandyssil	830	890			606	626
148	Llanmerewig	158	146			123	107
145	Castlewright	159	166			120	119
62	Aston	65	60			41	40
1369	Churchstoke	1320	1263			1031	1011

Housing needs have been continually under observation during the year; but no definite agreement has been arrived at, though the trend of opinion is that the original number (44) should be reduced, if the Council decide not to go on with the complete Scheme very soon it will not rank for subsidy, as the Houses would not be completed by July, 1922. I trust the original Scheme will not be abandoned, especially as the capital cost is coming down, and further, because the Housing problem is one of the circle of means adopted by the Ministry of Health for the public good as also maternity, tuberculosis and infant welfare, in whatever direction one can economize, one cannot economize in infant life.

Housing.

1921	..	15	Completed.
1922	..	5	..
1923	..	5	..
1924	..	5	..
1925	..	2	..

Number of new houses erected during the year	..	2.
A part of Municipal Scheme	..	.. Nil.

(1) *Unfit Dwelling Houses.*—

Inspection (1) Total number of houses inspected for housing defects (under P.H. or Housing Acts) .. 118.

(2) Number of houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910. 118.

(3) Number of houses found to be in a state so dangerously injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation Nil.

(4) Number of houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation 42.

(2) *Remedy of defects without service of formal Notices*, 32.

(3) *Action under Statutory Power*.—

A.—Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act 1919:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs. Nil.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit :—

(a) by owners Nil.

(b) by Local Authority in default of owners Nil.

(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close Nil.

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied. Nil.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which

(a) by owners	} Nil.
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	

C.—Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1909 :

- (1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders .. Nil.
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made .. Nil.
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling houses having been rendered fit Nil.
- (4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made .. Nil.
- (5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders .. Nil.

Drainage and Sewerage.

There are no modern drainage schemes attached to the villages of your district, the houses being provided with drains which empty individually into open ditches, adjoining fields and in rivers running near by, causing pollution to the latter. This is a matter, when new houses are proposed to be erected, I call upon the owner to make provision for a soak away pit to receive the contents of the drain instead of emptying direct into the river or stream.

Scavenging.

No scavenging schemes are in existence in your district. This must be a great difficulty to be overcome by the village inhabitants. Houses which are provided with a garden or other open space may bury their refuse, etc.; but a great difficulty must be found to people who have no such gardens, etc.; even then it is not always convenient to excavate in your garden in order to dispose of this matter.

Water Supply.

All the parishes obtain their water from wells or pumps, some of which are situated a considerable distance away. In the more isolated parts of your district probably the dwellings obtain their drinking water from small brooks, etc.: which are of course liable to pollution from various sources.

Sanitary Arrangements.

Privies are mostly in use, but in several dwelling W.C.'s are in existence one or two being situated in Berriew Village which discharge into the river.

Housing.

During the year, as instructed, I have been engaged on House to House Inspections. These were to be done alphabetically, but I found it to be a great advantage to me to make inspections here and there according to the vicinity of the district I happened to be in, but the majority of inspections have been made in Berriew Parish.

It will take a considerable time to complete the whole of the district, as, when defective premises are found, constant visits have to be made in order to ascertain whether repairs have been completed.

Details of repairs that have been carried out will be found in the summary of this report.

Dairies and Cowsheds Order, 1885 & 1925.

The Cowhouses in your district are receiving regular inspections, and Certificates of Registration are now being issued.

Slaughter Houses and Workshops.

These have all received periodical and regular inspection and I have found no ground on which to complain, except that the Slaughter House at Berriew is situated on the side of the Main Road.

General Summary.

Dwellings inspected under The P.H.A. of 1875 and				
Housing Acts	..	..	..	118
Inspected and Recorded	..	..	..	118
Dwellings in present state unfit for occupation ..				—
Dwellings not reasonably fit in all respects. .			..	42

Dwellings found to be unfit and closed	—
Dwellings on which defects have been remedied by informal notice	32
Legal proceedings taken under The P.H.A. of 1875 and Housing Acts	—
Total Number of dwellings repaired during year under Housing Acts	52

Details of above as follows :—

Roofs repaired	13
New Roof provided	—
Windows repaired so as to open	6
Floors repaired	3
Soil removed from rear of dwellings	5
Repair to Walls, &c.	13
Repairs to Eaves and Gutters	2
Eaves Gutter provided where same did not exist	10
Contamination	—

Defects remedied under The P.H. Act of 1875 ..	22
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Details of above as follows :—

New Privies provided	0
Privies repaired	4
Pail Closets substituted	4
Drains repaired	4
New Drains provided	10

Inspections have also been made re common nuisances under The P.H. Act of 1875.

Number of Complaints received.. ..	4
New Dwellings erected	2
Water Samples taken.. ..	0
Houses disinfected	3
Number of Bakehouses	2
Number of Slaughter houses	3
Number of Workshops	25

Cowsheds :—

Wholesalers (approximate)	..	..	..	70
Retailers ..	..	..	..	I

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. D. THOMAS,

Welshpool,

Medical Officer of Health.

May, 1926.

—O—

